

Appl. No. 09/960,078  
Amdt. Dated 11/28/2004  
Reply to Office action of 10/05/200

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 8-10, 21-24 and 30-32, previously allowed, remain in this application as previously presented. Claims 2, 6-7 and 25 are currently amended and also remain in this application. Claims 4-5 are currently cancelled and claims 3, and 11-20 have been previously canceled. Claims 8-10, 21-24, and 26-32 remain in this application as originally or previously presented.

2. The information disclosure statement filed July 19, 2004 fails to comply with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97, 1.98 and MPEP § 609 because it lacks either a statement as specified in 37 CFR 1.97(e) or the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(p) and further fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3) because it does not include a concise explanation of the relevance, as it is presently understood by the individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) most knowledgeable about the content of the information, of each patent listed that is not in the English language. It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered as to the merits. Applicant is advised that the date of any re-submission of any item of information contained in this information disclosure statement or the submission of any missing element(s) will be the date of submission for purposes of determining compliance with the requirements based on the time of filing the statement, including all certification requirements for statements under 37 CFR 1.97(e). See MPEP § 609 ¶ C(1).

The information disclosure statement filed July 19, 2004 was based on the patents cited in a European Search Report (attached herewith) issued on the corresponding application pending in the EPO. The European Search Report issued on May 5, 2004 and the information disclosure statement filed July 19, 2004 was less than three months from the issuance as required by 37 CFR 1.97.

The relevance of the references was that they were cited in the European Search Report of a corresponding application. All of the cited references were in the English language.

3. Claims 2, 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Black et al. (US 3,389,032) as applied in the last office

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action.

4. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Black et al. (US 3,389,032) taken in view of JP 2001-247037 to Shimizu and/or Choulhard (US 2,336,596) as applied in the last office action.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 6 presents a combination of rollers and rails that is both novel and non-obvious over the prior art presently known, therefore claim 6 is amended to place it in independent form by incorporating in it the forgoing citations of claims 4 and 5, which are consequently cancelled.

Claim 2 is amended to make it dependent on the currently amended claim 6, now in independent form as a replacement for the canceled independent claim 4.

In particular, Black et al. discloses an automated tire building system with a rail system of two approximately parallel rails comprising a first rail having a substantially flat top and a second rail having a substantially inverted V-shaped top, but the two wheels (112b) for riding on the second rail are V-grooved rather than "at least two pairs of V-mounted rollers attached to each tire building drum to ride on the second rail" as cited in claim 6. Furthermore, although Chouinard discloses two pairs of V-mounted rollers, they do not ride on a single "second" rail (i.e., V-shaped), but rather must ride on two vertically superimposed "second" rails in order to provide the desired alignment. Furthermore, although Shimizu discloses a pair of rollers "configured in inverted V shape", it is clear from the illustrations of all three figures that the track (rail) has special grooves on its inverted V shaped surface that apparently surround the each roller, in essence holding the roller pair on the track, thereby providing alignment with only a single roller pair riding in the grooved surface of a single rail. (Applicant believes that this makes sense of Derwent's apparently mistranslated "advantage" statement that states "Prevents separation of roller and bolt by use of forks.") Thus the obvious combination of Black et al. and Shimizu would be to have flat rollers on the flat first rail, plus a single pair of rollers riding on a second rail that is both inverted V-shaped and grooved according to the teaching of Shimizu. It can be seen that the single pair of rollers in such a rail system would prevent twisting of the

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forked bolt due to the rollers being held by the track's grooves, and thus would maintain alignment of the tire building drum. However, because of the grooved rail, this Black/Shimizu system accomplishes the desired alignment in a distinctly different way than the method cited in Applicant's claim 6.

4. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Black et al. (US 3,389,032) taken in view of JP 2001-247037 to Shimizu and/or Choulard (US 2,336,596) as applied in the last office action.

5 & 7. Claims 7 and 25-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Black et al. (US 3,389,032) taken in view of Hoehn et al. (US 4,718,810) as applied in the last office action. Claims 2, 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Black et al. (US 3,389,032) as applied in the last office action.

Claim 7 is amended to make it dependent on the currently amended claim 6, now in independent form as a replacement for the canceled independent claim 4.

Independent claim 25 is currently amended and claims 26-29 remain as previously presented claims depending from claim 25. Claim 25 has been amended to emphasize aspects of Applicant's method of using a self-propelled vehicle that are believed to be novel and non-obvious over known prior art. In particular, the transporter (vehicle) disclosed by Hoehn et al. is: (a) unitary with the device being carried, (b) rides on a rail system of two parallel rails, and (c) uses a third cog-rail to push on with the self-propelling motor drive system. In contrast, applicant's vehicle (AGV) is: (a) independent of the tire building drum ("flexibly attached to" per claim 8); and (b, c) rides on wheels upon the plant floor, some of which are self-propelling drive wheels as is known for typical wire guided AGV's (also see page 9, lines 19-23). Thus the drum rides on the rail system when it needs alignment, towed by the flexibly attached self-propelled vehicle that is not precisely aligned, and rests on the vehicle to be carried to and from the rail system when the drum does not need to be aligned. In order to clearly cite these novel aspects of the invention, claim 25 is amended to replace the original clause stating "independently moving each tire building drum with a self-propelled vehicle traveling on a rail system having two parallel rails to the plurality of work stations" with more specific clauses copied from claim 8

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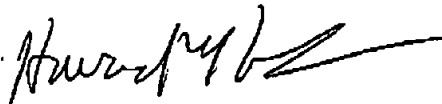
and modified to specify the use of wheels on a floor by the self propelled vehicle, as supported by page 9, lines 19-23 of the detailed description. Also, for the sake of consistent terminology, the adjective "parallel" is added to each occurrence in this claim of the term "parallel rails".

6. Claims 8-10, 21-24 and 30-32 have been allowed for reasons already of record and therefore remain in their previously presented form without further amendment.

### Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. No new matter is entered by this Amendment. Applicant has made a diligent effort to amend the claims of this application so that they define novel structure which is non-obvious. If there are still some issues to be resolved, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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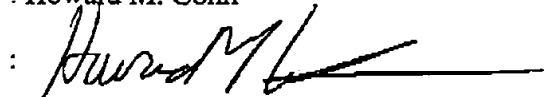
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### CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION BY FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. 703-872-9306) on November 29, 2004.

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